



**F
R
I
E
N
D
S**



The Missionary Society of St. James the Apostle
Diocesan priests serving the poorest of the poor since 1958.

**January
2026**



"Popular Piety & Faith Formation..."

Dear Friends,

At the end of August I was able to visit with Fr. Fidel Percca Abal, at his parish just outside Cusco, Peru. I met Fr. Fidel twenty years ago when he was Pastor in the town of Yauri, high in the Peruvian Andes. Fr. Fidel, while not a member of the St. James Society, has always maintained a very close connection with us. He joins us in Lima for retreats, ongoing formation, and fraternal gatherings. I was delighted to be able to visit with Fr. Fidel in Oropesa and gain an understanding of his work there and the needs of the parish in general. I have asked him to introduce us to the parish of 'Our Lord and Saviour', Oropesa:

I am Father Fidel Percca Abal, a diocesan priest from the Archdiocese of Cusco in Peru. I have been serving as parish priest at the Parish of Santísimo Salvador in Oropesa since 2024. In my 28 years of priesthood, I have been fortunate to meet missionary priests from the Society of St. James the Apostle in the Prelature of Sicuani, with whom I have maintained a friendship in the Lord for more than twenty years. The district of Oropesa is a Peruvian town located in the region of Cusco, province of Quispicanchi. It is located at an altitude of 3,110 meters above sea level and has a population of approximately 21,000 inhabitants. It is twenty-one km east of the city of Cusco.

The iconic places and activities that give the district its identity are the Tipón Archaeological Park, one of the most representative sites of Inca hydraulic architecture, and the Santísimo Salvador temple, built in stone, with a beautiful Baroque altar and walls covered with murals depicting various religious images.

Oropesa has its own unique and exclusive gastronomic delight: bread, an exquisite product that has earned this city the nickname of the National Capital of Bread. The Parish of Santísimo Salvador in Oropesa was created in the early 16th century. This parish has religious structures for worship such as the imposing Parish Temple of Santísimo Salvador and the chapels of the Virgin Asunta and the Virgin Reina Estrella, located in the town of Oropesa. There is also the Santa Rosa de Lima Chapel and the Virgen del Carmen Chapel, both located in the community of Choquepata-Tipón. Every year, the four chapels host large religious festivals



St. Rose of Lima Statue - Patroness of the Police.



dedicated to the Virgen del Carmen, Asunta, Santa Rosa de Lima, and the Virgen Reina Estrella, with various activities such as trade fairs, cultural and social events, and religious activities. Some of these activities include novena masses, festive masses, processions, and pilgrimages to cemeteries. The protagonists of these religious festivals are the dozens of comparsas, mayordomos, and brotherhoods. The celebration of Holy Week takes center stage around the church, and a series of activities are planned under the leadership of two brotherhoods: the "Lord of the Tremors" and the "Holy Sepulcher". They are the stewards of Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Easter Sunday, and Divine Mercy Sunday. There is also the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of bakers. These festivals move and inspire thousands of people from the area and elsewhere.

The program of initiation and formation in the Christian life for the large population of the parish is structured around catechumens and initiates. Among the catechumens is a group of children aged six to ten who are preparing for baptism and are called "Semillitas" (little seeds). Schoolchildren from 3rd grade to 1st grade of secondary school make up the group "Amigos de Jesús" (Friends of Jesus) and are preparing for the sacrament of communion. Teenagers and young people in 9th grade and young people in higher education, up to the age of 24,



make up the group "Witnesses and Friends of Jesus" and they prepare for Confirmation. Adults over the age of 25 who have not received their sacraments through the catechetical program, comprise the group of men and women who are witnesses of Christ. For those who have already been initiated, there is a group for formation in Christian life at home, particularly for couples who wish to marry; there is also a youth community of "peace builders" for those who have already celebrated their sacraments as part of the Cathetical Program.

Thanks to the hard work and fund raising of many parishioners, we have managed to complete the construction of our new parish center. This parish center has been many years in the making and was extremely necessary, since prior to the building of this center, none of the parish groups had an adequate space in which to meet for faith formation instruction. I am grateful to Fr. David and the benefactors of the St. James Society who have helped us equip the new parish center with the tools necessary to provide faith formation and catechetical classes. As we begin another new year please know of our enormous gratitude, from all of us here in Oropesas, Cusco, to all of you who continue to support the mission work of the St. James Society. ~ *Fr. Fidel Percca Abal*



The newly constructed Parish Center in Oropesas, Cusco.

The Work of Christmas

by Michael Daugherty

*When the carols have been stilled,
When the star-topped tree is taken down,
When family and friends are gone home,
When we are back to our schedules
The work of Christmas begins:
To heal a broken planet,*

*To feed the hungry,
To build bridges of trust, not walls of fear,
To share our gifts,
To seek justice and peace for all people,
To bring Christ's light to the world.*



With Every Good Wish in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rev. David Costello".

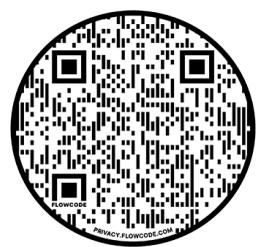
Rev. David Costello, Director



GIVING MADE EASY

**Please scan QR code to
donate or visit**

www.socstjames.com



For the purpose of wills, bequests, and living trusts, our official name is:

The Missionary Society of St. James the Apostle, Inc.

24 Clark Street • Boston, MA 02109 • (617) 742-4715 • e: office@socstjames.com • socstjames.com